AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

At page 19, paragraph 2, starting on line 10, please change to read as follows:

The newness determination section 233 compares the entries, which are received at another nodes and set in the configuration information synchronization table 232 by the synchronization determination sections (235$_1$ and 235$_2$) (234$_1$ and 234$_2$), with the node synchronization tables (234$_1$ and 234$_2$). The newness determination section 233 determines whether the configuration information is new. When it is new, the newness determination section 233 sets the configuration information (information about node and port) of the entries and the addition/deletion flags in the rest of the node synchronization tables (234$_1$ or 234$_2$).

At page 19, paragraph 3, starting on line 19, please change to read as follows:

The node synchronization table 234$_1$, the synchronization determination section 235$_1$, the transmitting section 236$_1$, and the receiving section 237$_1$ are provided correspondingly to the node N1 (the node synchronization table 134$_1$, the synchronization determination section 135$_1$ 135, the transmitting section 136$_1$, and the receiving section 137$_1$). They have a function for establishing the synchronization of the configuration information between the nodes N2 and N1. The configuration information, the addition/deletion flag, and the synchronization flag which should synchronize with the node N1 (virtual path configuration apparatus 100) are set in the node synchronization table 234$_1$.

At page 23, paragraph 3, starting on line 21, please change to read as follows:

The node synchronization table 334$_1$, the synchronization determination section 335$_1$, the transmitting section 336$_1$, and the receiving section 337$_1$ are provided correspondingly to the node N1 (the node synchronization table 134$_1$, the synchronization determination section 135$_2$

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135, the transmitting section 136₂, and the receiving section 137₂). They have a function for establishing the synchronization of the configuration information between the nodes N3 and N1. The configuration information and the addition/deletion flag which should synchronize with the node N1 (virtual path configuration apparatus 100) are set in the node synchronization table 334_1.

At page 32, paragraph 3, starting on line 15, please change to read as follows:

For example, as the <u>reception</u> ~~transmission~~ virtual paths, the virtual paths #14, #24, #34, and #44 in which the port P4 of the node N3 shown in Fig. 1 is the <u>end</u> ~~starting~~ point (<u>reception</u> ~~transmission~~ side) are set.

At page 52, paragraph 2, starting on line 10, please change to read as follows:

AT step SF5, the bi-directional virtual path confirming section 143 retrieves the starting point node and the starting point port read at step SF4, and the end point node and the end point port read at step SF3 as a key from the reception virtual path ~~list~~ management table 142R (see Fig. 8).

Meanwhile, when the determined result at step SF6 is "Yes", at step SF7, the bi-directional virtual path confirming section 143 retrieves the starting point node and the starting point port read at step SF4, and the end point node and the end point port read at step SF3 as a key from the transmission virtual path ~~list~~ management table 142S (see Fig. 8) with the end point and the starting point being exchanged with each other.